

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

May 2007

MAY HAPPENINGS

We look forward to the May luncheon which will feature delicious Coast cuisine prepared by Prima Luke. Last month diners were treated to the famous Prima's Pasta. The luncheon will be held on Thursday, May 17, 2007, at the Kate Lobrano House on Cue Street. The speaker will be Buzz Olsen, Bay Saint Louis City Clerk/Director of Administration. We enjoy seeing everyone each month, hearing the news, and discussing our recovery progress, both community and individual. Join us for this special time. Reservations may be made by calling 467-4090. Please call by noon on Wednesday, May 16, 2007, to assure your reservation and to help us plan seating. The price for the lunch is \$7.00 payable at the door.

FEMME, FEMME, FEMME

Don't forget the May 24 trip to the New Orleans Museum of Art to view the "Femme, Femme, Femme" exhibit. Check the Gulf Coast Transportation ad for details. DEADLINE TO SIGN UP IS FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2007.



The new Bay Bridge nearing completion —picture compliments of Jerry Zimmerman

CONNECTING THE COAST ONCE AGAIN

By Eddie Coleman

The opening of the original Highway 90 bridge across the Bay of St. Louis in 1928, 111 years after statehood, was a joyous occasion for the people of Hancock County because it signaled an end to the long land trip from Bay Saint Louis to Henderson Point by way of Kiln/DeLisle Road. We can relate to that joy since we have had to travel a land route because of the damage to the "new" bridge wrought by Hurri-

cane Katrina. One of the first milestones we celebrated at the beginning of the long recovery process from the devastation brought by the storm was the opening of the CSX railroad bridge in February 2006. The opening of the new automobile bridge in May 2007 will be a *huge* milestone.

In 1928 the first automobile bridge across the Bay of St. Louis was dedicated and spanned from Ulman Avenue across the water to Henderson Point. It was the result of hard work and dedication on the part of Horatio S. Weston of Logtown, then president of the Hancock County Board of Supervisors. Even

(Continued on p. 3)

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Published monthly by the
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MISSION STATEMENT

"TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF HANCOCK COUNTY AND TO PRESERVE THE KATE LOBRANO HOUSE AND COLLECTIONS THEREIN; TO RESEARCH AND INTERPRET LIFE IN HANCOCK COUNTY; AND TO ENCOURAGE AN APPRECIATION OF AND INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION."

**PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE**

Today, I am speaking to you from my heart. I want to let you know why I decided to take on a Board position with the Historical Society. My first reason was to pay back Charles Gray's kindness to me when I started the Rose Society. He was very instrumental in my success. My second reason was that my husband, Jack, and I were spared, for the most part, the ravages of Katrina. I knew that I had the time and that there was so much need. I am one of the only Board members that didn't have to rebuild or live in a trailer. It is payback for my good fortune.

There is so much work to be done here in the Kate Lobrano House, and I am truly enjoying the experience. I cannot say enough about my fellow Board members. They are all committed to the rebuilding of

the Society. The roof has been repaired, and we are ready to begin the other improvements. Though this structure does not belong to any one person but to the community as a whole, we all on the Board feel that it is our baby and needs protection. My hope and dream is to see the Kate Lobrano House become the little "Jewel Box" of Bay St. Louis and make the Lobrano family proud. We are very lucky as a Society to have such a nice building. There are not many left.

It is never too soon to be thinking about my replacement or another Board position. Next January my two year term will be over as well as that of several Board members. Can you help? Can you give us some of your time? I hope so. If you are interested, please speak to me about this.

Melinda

First bridge across the Bay of Saint Louis, 1928



The "new" bridge dedicated in 1954

(Continued from p. 1)

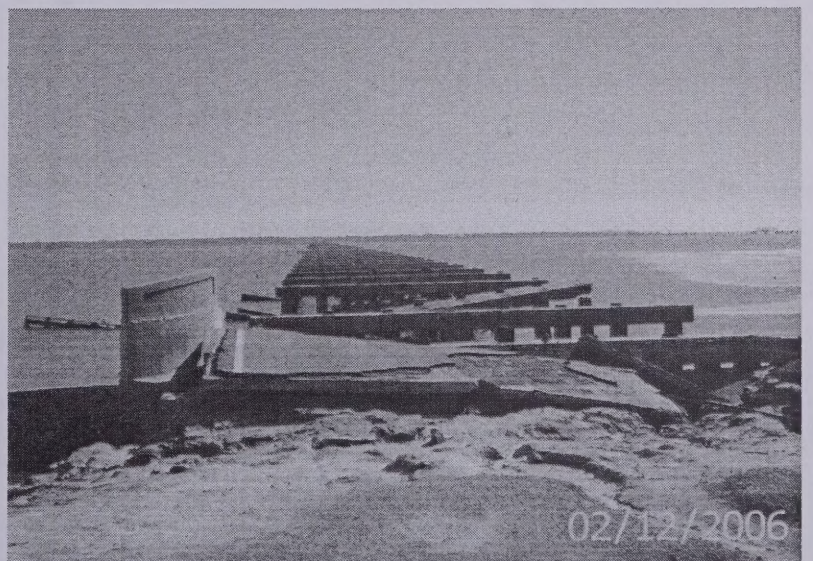
though a bridge across the bay was not a new idea, it was actively pursued by Mr. Weston, who considered the ferry operating between Bay Saint Louis and Henderson Point to be slow, inadequate, and dangerous. In the words of a local newspaper editorial dated April 18, 1914, "If you are interested in the Gulf Coast, you should tell the supervisor from your beat that you want a bridge over the Bay of St. Louis...." The bridge was built of creosoted timbers, and local legend tells that it, or parts of it, burned almost annually each summer.

An act of the Mississippi Legislature in 1950 authorized the building of a new concrete bridge to replace the old wooden one. Completed in 1953 and dedicated in 1954, the bridge had four lanes and was originally operated as a toll bridge. This new

span was located about a half-mile north of the old bridge. Moving the approach necessitated the demolition of some beachfront homes including the one of R. R. Perkins, formerly owned by Dr. Herman Von Goren. Damage caused by Hurricane Camille on August 17,

1969, was repaired, and the bridge was in continual use until it was virtually destroyed by Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005.

In early 2006 the Mississippi Department of Transportation awarded a \$266.8 million contract to Granite Construction Co. of California and Archer Western Contractors of Atlanta to build a new Highway 90 bridge across the Bay of St. Louis. According to the *Sea Coast Echo* of March 1, 2006, "Under the terms of the contract, Granite and Archer Western must have one lane in each direction up and running by May 16, 2007, with all four lanes open by November 2007." Allan Nelson, project director for the Granite/Archer Western joint venture, was quoted in the April 13, 2007, *Sun Herald*: "Ordinarily it would take three or four years" to complete such a project. However, the company was given a deadline of eighteen months.



Destruction by Katrina— picture compliments of Jerry Zimmerman

Keeping the same basic path as the 1954 structure, the new bridge is a high-rise with an eighty-foot center span rather than a drawbridge. When completed, it will consist of four travel lanes, an eight-foot shoulder, and a wide pedestrian and bicycle lane. No longer will motorists need to wait because "the bridge is up." But the elevated nature of the structure should give motorists a grand view of the bay as well as a panoramic view of the revitalization and rebirth of the Old Town area of Bay Saint Louis.

As their forefathers did prior to 1928, citizens of Bay Saint Louis, Waveland, and the lower part of Hancock County have benefited from the ferry which has operated across the bay since November 2006. However, they fervently anticipate the opening of the new bridge with eagerness and joy.

BAY-WAVELAND YACHT CLUB

By Scott Bagley

Just north of the new Highway 90 bridge on North Beach Boulevard sit the twin trailers that presently serve as the Bay-Waveland Yacht Club. The Club, like so many other organizations in Hancock County following Hurricane Katrina, is planning for the next chapter of its history.

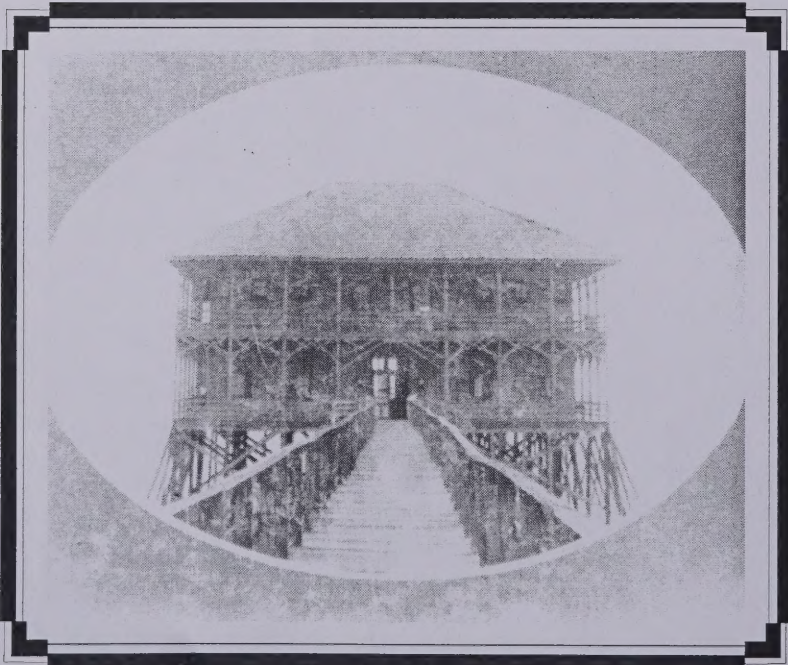
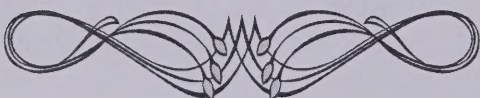
The Bay-Waveland Yacht Club was originally chartered in 1896, and its first clubhouse was completed in late September of the same year. It was located near the center of town at the foot of Washington Street out over the water of the Mississippi Sound connected to the shore by a 1,100 foot pier. According to an article in the *Sea Coast Echo* (October 1896):

"[T]he club was erected for a sum of \$2500, and was equipped with the water works

service and departments for the accommodations of ladies as well as for the gentlemen. The appointments seem to have all been well planned and carried out with equal precision. The "grandstand" double story is spacious and the building's location gives it a position of advantage that could not be secured anywhere else. It is gratifying to note such a fine building for the Bay and the association will be the agency to bring many people here and doubling the prosperity of the Bay as a summer resort."

In 1901, the Bay-Waveland Yacht Club became a charter member of the Southern Gulf Coast Yachting Association. Unfortunately, on September 28, 1915, the clubhouse, its facilities and all records were destroyed by a hurricane. This hurricane was the largest storm recorded up to that date to the coastal areas from Pensacola, Florida, to Morgan City, Louisiana. Meetings and regattas continued from an old steamship landing known as "Stokes Pier," but, because of no clubhouse and no dues being collected, the club lapsed into inactivity until 1921 when the club was reorganized as the Bay-Waveland Yacht and Athletic Club. For \$6000 the Club purchased a brick building at the corner of Washington Street and "the front" that had once housed the Kellar blue store and then a furniture store. In 1922 the Club was admitted to the Gulf Yachting Association.

Again, though, there came times of inactivity during the Depression and World War II con-

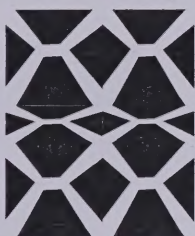
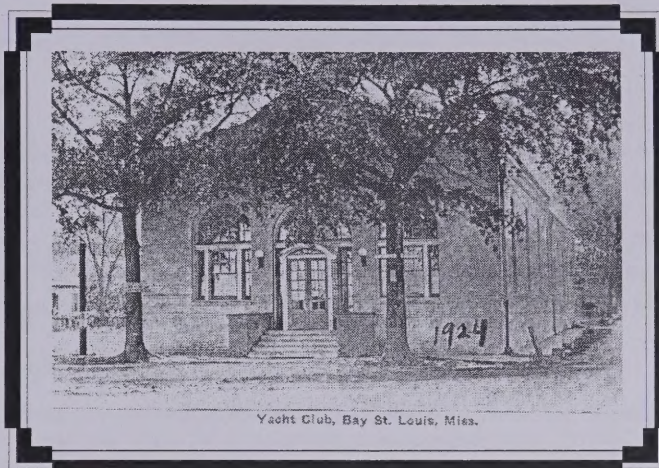


The
Bay-
Wave-
land
Yacht
Club
circa
1900

tinuing into the late 1940's that included some time following the major hurricane of 1947. The Club was reorganized again in 1949 at its present location by a group of yachtsmen and civic leaders.

The Bay-Waveland Yacht Club celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1996. Since its chartering, the club has demonstrated an amazing ability to overcome its setbacks and has achieved an impressive level of local, regional, national, and international prominence in the sport of sailing, having won and hosted a substantial number of important championship sailing events.

The Bay-Waveland Yacht Club, 1924



Dorothea Martin

February 21, 1913—April 13, 2007

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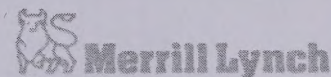
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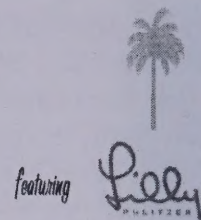
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Thursday, May 24, 2007— We will visit the New Orleans Museum of Art's special exhibit of paintings by famous artists "Femme, Femme, Femme" which has been loaned to New Orleans by Museums in France. The price is \$35.00.

The bus will leave from two locations: 9:00 A. M.—the Community Center at Diamondhead and 9:30 A. M.— the K-Mart parking lot in Waveland.

Please send checks to Gulf Coast Transportation, 131 Lanai Village, Diamondhead, Ms. 39525 For further details, please call Doris at 228-255-3345.

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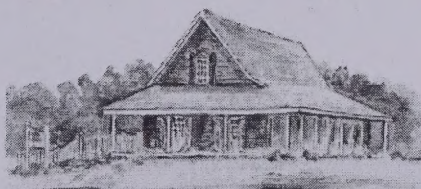
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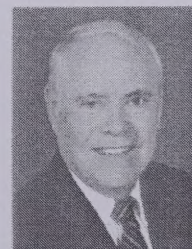
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